



400th

SMASH ISSUE!

APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE



JUNE
NO. 400

15c

Detective  Comics presents

BATMAN

ROBIN and BATGIRL



"CHALLENGE OF THE
MAN-BAT!"



NOW!



2



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BATMAN

CHALLENGE OF THE MAN-BAT

STORY:
FRANK
ROBBINS

ART:
NEAL ADAMS &
DICK
GIORDANO

GOTHAM MUSEUM OF
NATURAL HISTORY...
AFTER HOURS...

THAT YOU UP
THERE, LANGSTROM?
COULD HARDLY MAKE
YOU OUT AMONG
THOSE OVER-SIZED
PAPIER-MÂCHÉ
BATS!

YUP, CURATOR
WILKINS--
IT'S ME,
BURNING THE
MIDNIGHT OIL
AGAIN...



TO GET THIS
NIGHT-CREATURE
HABITAT EXHIBIT
COMPLETED FOR
NEXT MONTH'S
OPENING!

AND I
GUARANTEE
THIS LARGER-
THAN-LIFE RE-
CREATION IS
GOING TO BE AN
EYE-OPENER!

BUT AS SOON AS THE DOOR OF THE GREAT
EXHIBIT HALL CLANGS SHUT...



HE COULDN'T
LEAVE SOON
ENOUGH FOR
ME!

NOW I CAN
GET BACK TO
MY REAL
WORK WITH
LIVE
COUNTER-
PARTS!

5-349

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THE BRIGHT LIGHT HURTS
YOUR WEAK EYES, DOES
IT? SOON YOU'LL SLEEP,
LITTLE FURRED
FRIEND...



AND SOON I WILL HAVE A
NATURAL ABILITY EVEN THE
GREAT **BATMAN**
DOESN'T POSSESS!

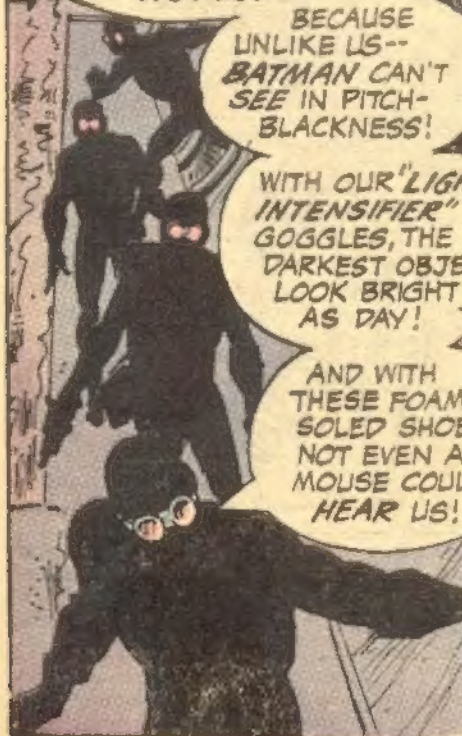
WHILE UNDERGROUND IN ANOTHER
PART OF GOTHAM CITY...OTHER
MEN HAVE COME UP WITH A
WAY TO COMBAT BATMAN'S
NIGHT-FIGHTING ABILITY!...

FROM NOW ON OUR VAULT-
HEISTS WILL BE CARRIED OUT
UNDETECTED! NO ONE--NOT
EVEN THE MASKED MAN-
HUNTER--WILL BE ABLE TO
SPOT US!

BECAUSE
UNLIKE US--
BATMAN CAN'T
SEE IN PITCH-
BLACKNESS!

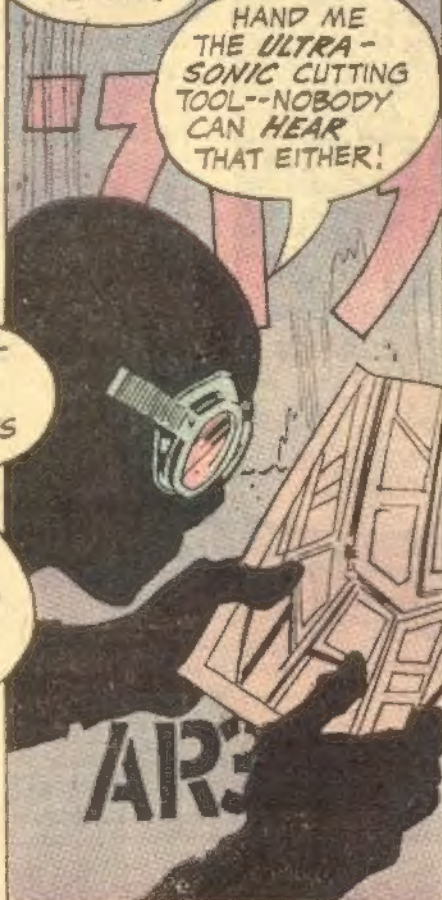
WITH OUR "LIGHT-
INTENSIFIER"
GOGGLES, THE
DARKEST OBJECTS
LOOK BRIGHT
AS DAY!

AND WITH
THESE FOAM-
SOLED SHOES,
NOT EVEN A
MOUSE COULD
HEAR US!



THE WALL TO THE GEM-VAULT
ROOM SHOULD BE RIGHT HERE,
ACCORDING TO THIS UNDER-
GROUND PLAN! READS JUST
LIKE I HAD A SPOTLIGHT
ON IT!

HAND ME
THE **ULTRA-
SONIC** CUTTING
TOOL--NOBODY
CAN HEAR
THAT EITHER!



HERE,
BOSS...

WHAT WAS THAT?
THOUGHT I
HEARD SOME-
THING...





MUST'VE BEEN A SEWER-RAT... HEY! CLUMSY!

SORRY, BOSS... THOUGHT YOU HAD IT!

CLANGGGGGGGGG



AND EVEN BEFORE THE ECHOING SOUND DIES OUT...

YOU'VE HAD IT ALL RIGHT!

THE BATMAN?! HE HEARD...



AS THE CAPED CRUSADER LANDS IN THE STYGIAN DARKNESS, A WELL-REHEARSED ESCAPE PLAN GOES INTO SILENT, SMOOTH OPERATION!...

BATMAN WON'T DARE SHINE A LIGHT... OR HE BECOMES THE TARGET!



INSTANTLY USING HIS FINELY ATTUNED HEARING, THE GOTHAM GANGBUSTER SWINGS INTO ACTION...

ONLY THE FAINTEST RUSTLE OF CLOTHING-- BUT THEY'RE EVADING ME LIKE THEY CAN SEE!



AS THE LAST OF THE THUGS FLITS PAST...

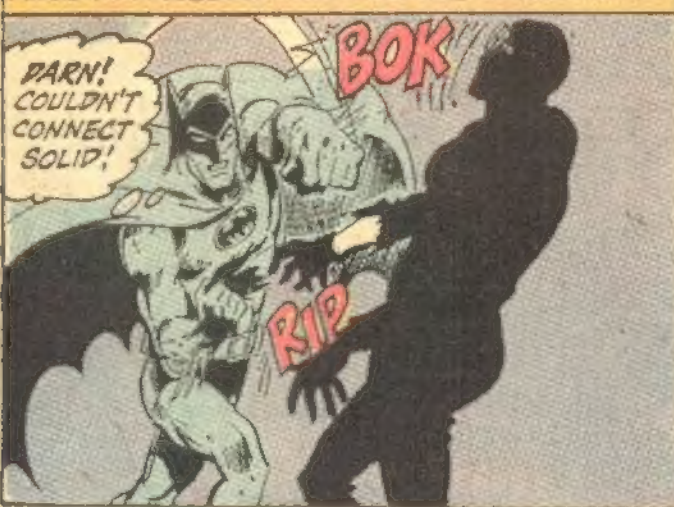
BATMAN... BLIND AS A BAT! CAN'T RESIST THE TEMPTATION TO--



BUT, DEFTLY ROLLING WITH THE PUNCH...

ALL I NEEDED... SOME CONTACT TO LATCH ON TO!

INSTANTLY REGRETTING HIS RASHNESS, HIS PREY
PULLS AWAY... BECOMING A MOVING TARGET!



MOMENTS LATER, LEFT ALONE WITH AN EMPTY
SLEEVE...



THEN HE'S GOT US STYMIED,
BOSS! WE CAN'T PULL ANOTHER
"BLACKOUT" JOB WITHOUT
THAT SILENT GIZMO!

NOT UNLESS WE USE
IT AS A *WEAPON*
AGAINST THAT SNOOPER!
WHICH WE *WILL*... TO
LURE HIM INTO A
TRAP... WHERE WE'LL
BE READY FOR ANY
COUNTER-MOVE
HE MAKES!

LIKE WHEN?
WHERE?

TOMORROW NIGHT... *THERE!* THE
NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM... ITS
GEM COLLECTION IS IN A WINDOWLESS
HALL! AND WHEN THE LIGHTS
ARE SWITCHED OFF...

...PITCH-BLACKNESS! THEN
WE SWITCH ON BATMAN'S
HOMING SIGNAL, OUR ULTRA-S
CUTTER, AND...

WHILE IN THE
DEPTHS OF
THE OUT-
WARDLY
BLACKED-OUT
MUSEUM...

*THAT DOES IT... THE LAST OF A SERIES OF EVER-
INCREASING DOSES OF GLAND-EXTRACT!

AND NOW, MY LEATHERY-
WINGED FRIEND, WE WAIT THE
FIRST SIGNS OF INCREASED
SENSITIVITY TO MINUTE
SOUNDS...

...THE FIRST NECESSITY
FOR NATURAL SONAR-
DETECTION...

ARGHH-H!
THAT NOISE--
UNBEARABLE!

AND... MY EYES!
CAN'T STAND
THAT BLAZING
LIGHT!

SWITCHING OFF THE
OFFENDING LIGHT,
LANGSTROM HEADS
UNERRINGLY ACROSS
THE CLUTTERED LAB
TO THE CLOSET!...

SUNGLASSES
IN MY JACKET...
MUST GET
THEM!

THEN, A SUDDEN DAWNING REALIZATION...



GOOD LORD! I NAVIGATED IN UTTER BLACKNESS WITHOUT BUMPING INTO ANYTHING!

MY VOCAL-CORDS MUST'VE BEEN EMITTING SUPER-SONIC SIGNALS!



MY ULTRA-SENSITIVE HEARING PICKED UP THE BOUNCE-BACK ECHOES, GUIDING ME TO MY TARGET LIKE A HOMING MISSILE!

I'VE DONE IT! I NOW POSSESS A BAT'S NATURAL SONAR!



BUT... NORMAL SOUNDS CAN DRIVE ME CRAZY! HAVE TO DULL THEM...

THESE WAX EAR-PLUGS WILL DO TILL I CAN GET BETTER ONES!

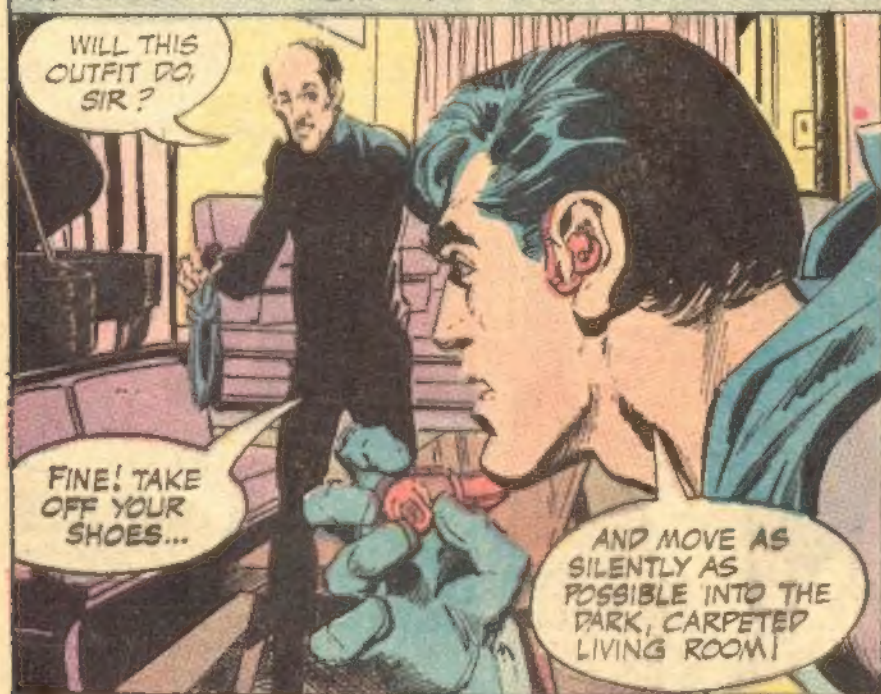
WHILE IN HIS SECRET LAB ATOP THE WAYNE FOUNDATION, BATMAN WORKS FEVERISHLY TO INCREASE HIS HEARING SENSITIVITY...



SINCE I'M A BATMAN IN NAME ONLY, I NEED AN ARTIFICIAL AID TO FIND MY TARGETS QUICKLY IN THE DARK!

THESE STEREO-LOCATOR EAR-PLUGS SHOULD DO THE JOB, ALFRED!

WORKING DEEP INTO THE NIGHT, THE CAPED CRUSADER FINALLY REACHES THE TEST STAGE...



WILL THIS OUTFIT DO, SIR?

FINE! TAKE OFF YOUR SHOES...

AND MOVE AS SILENTLY AS POSSIBLE INTO THE DARK, CARPETED LIVING ROOM!

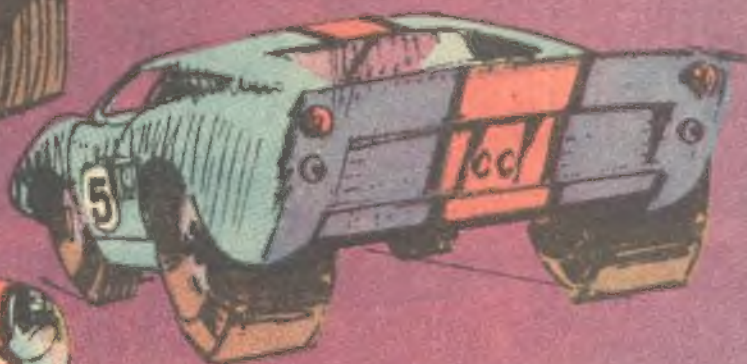
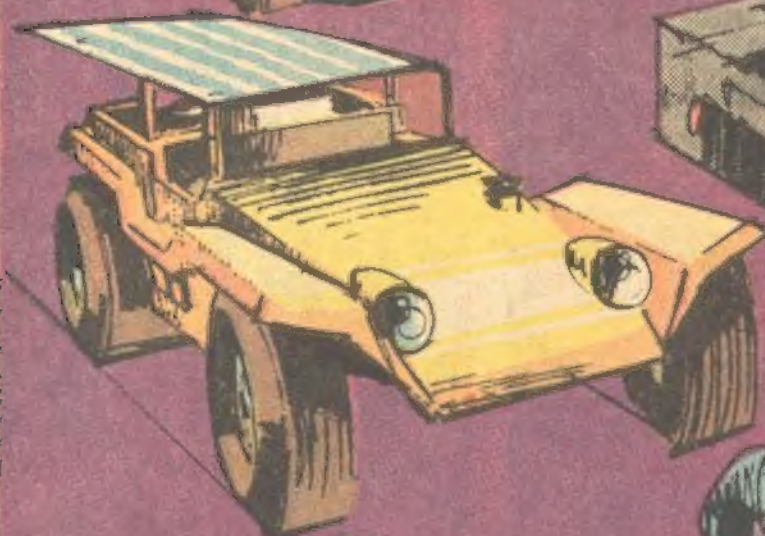
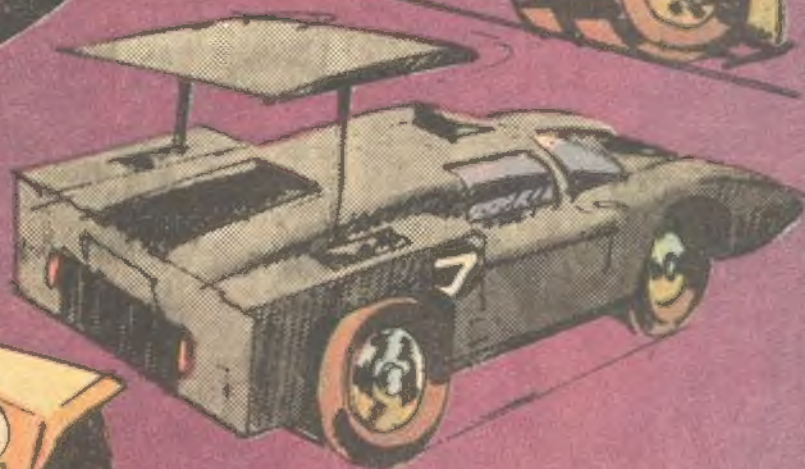
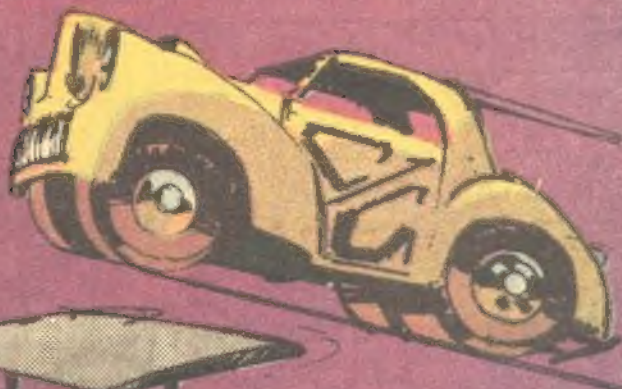
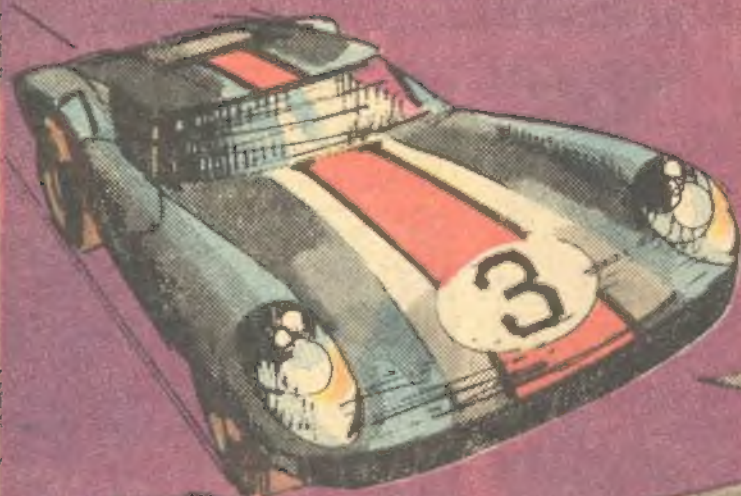


AND NOW, AS I PLUNGE EVERYTHING INTO DARKNESS... WE PLAY HIDE-AND-SEEK!

CONTINUED ON 2ND PAGE FOLLOWING

Tuff!

YOU BET THEY ARE



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IN A BRIEF BATTLE OF WITS, BOTH MEN MAKE NO MOVEMENT TO BETRAY THEIR LOCATION... UNTIL LIKE A POUNCING CAT...



AS THE LIGHTS ARE PUT ON AGAIN...

BUT ONE THING YOU COULDN'T DO! STOP YOUR...

...HEARTBEATS! MINE, LOUDER... AND YOURS, FAINTER!



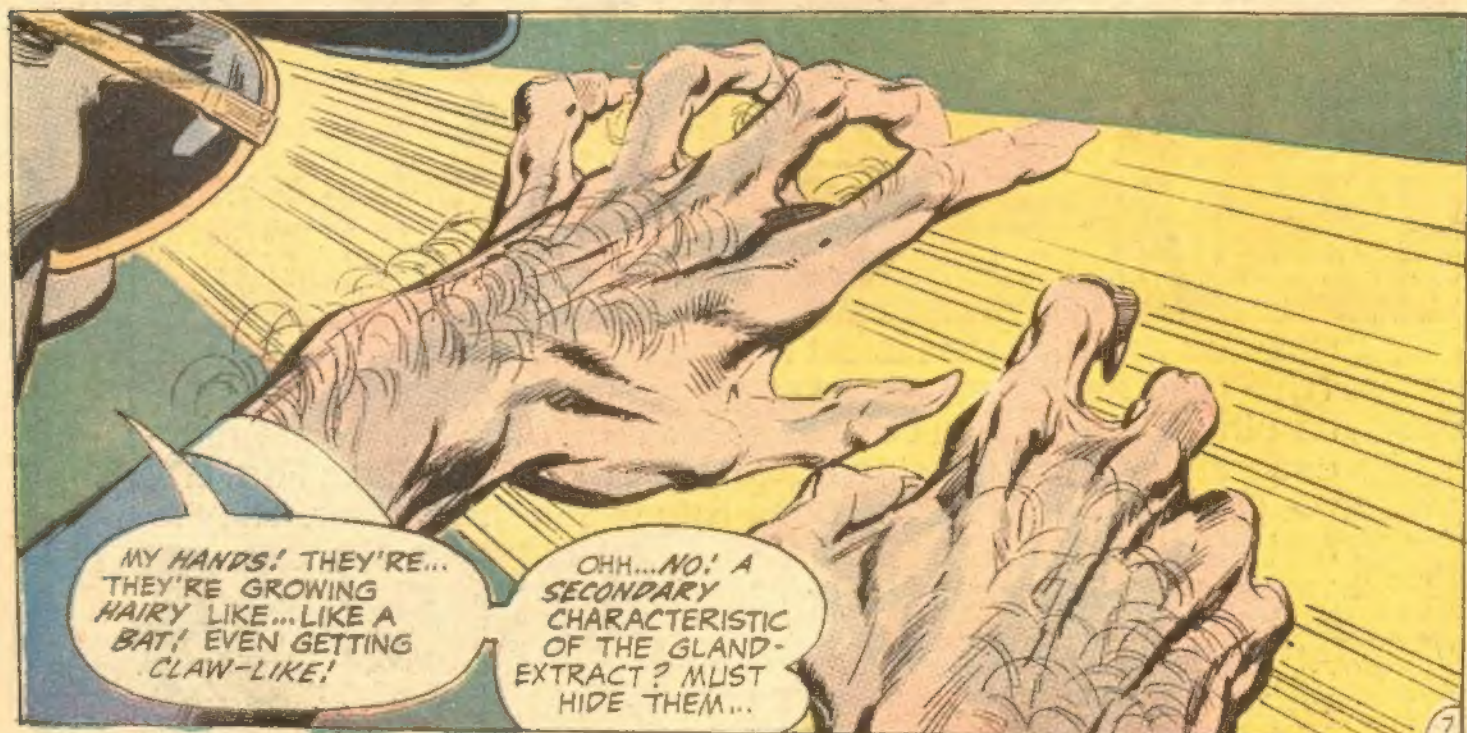
NOW I'M SET TO COPE WITH THIS "BLACKOUT" GANG... SOON AS I ANALYZE THE OPERATING FREQUENCY OF THIS ULTRA-SONIC CUTTER, AND RIG UP A LOCATION-FINDER!

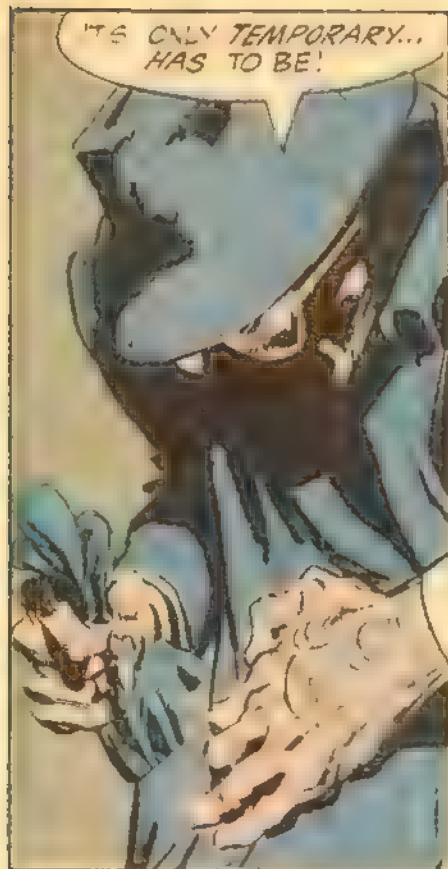


WHILE AT THE MUSEUM, A MAN FLUSHED WITH SUCCESS BUT WEARIED BY HIS TRYING BREAK-THROUGH...

ENOUGH FOR NOW! I MUST GET HOME TO BED...

W-WHAT'S-- THIS?!





IT'S ONLY TEMPORARY...
HAS TO BE!



...MY HAT!
WHAT PUSHED
IT OFF?



IN SILENT, GNAWING ANGLISH,
THE DELVER INTO THE UNKNOWN
RUSHES WILDLY ACROSS THE
ROOM...



AND THEN, IN ONE
REELING MOMENT
OF HORROR-STUCK
REALIZATION...
THE IMMENSITY
OF HIS "ACHIEVE-
MENT" IS
REVEALED TO HIM.

I'M... GAHRRR
... BECOMING
A

...MAN-EAT!



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- R.F., New Jersey

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HITTING, FIELDING, RUNNING AS IN REAL LIFE!

With YOU planning strategy, deciding on pinch-hitters, ordering defensive moves - you've still got to be crafty, because every man on your team plays exactly according to his real life quality. He makes errors you've got to watch out for. He may go into a sudden slump and you've got to get him out. He may rush into a red-hot hitting streak you've got to take advantage of; he may become a hero - at the wrong time!

KNOW 400 PLAYERS!

Yes, you'll get to know 400 real life players - on all 20 big league teams - better than anybody in your neighborhood! Because as a MANAGER you've got all the statistics at your fingertips - every man's hits, runs, stolen bases, batting record, etc. With this exciting real knowledge, it is possible for YOU, the manager, to

achieve thrilling victories even with a weak team.

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IT'S... SOME
UGLY NIGHTMARE!
THE GLAND-
EXTRACT MUST
BE CAUSING
HALLUCINATIONS!

I... I
CAN'T BE
TURNING
INTO...

ARGH-H-H...
SKREEK! SKREEK!
I... AM!

I MUST
FIND AN
ANTIDOTE!

BUT...
WHAT?

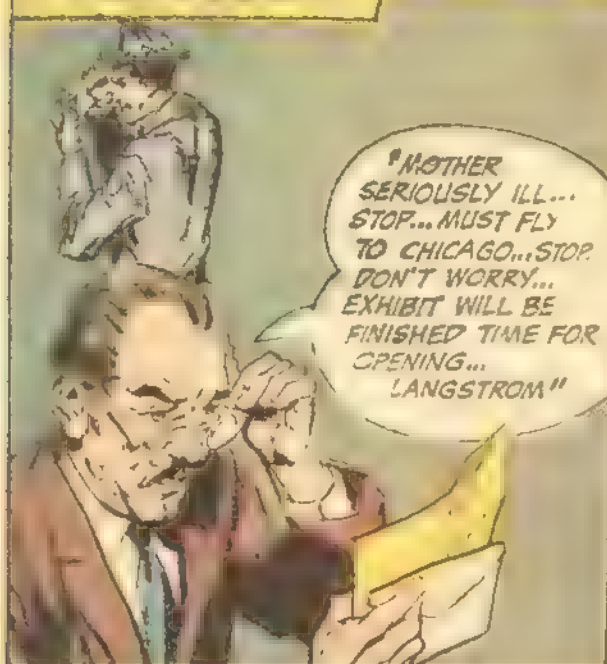
STAY AWAY
FROM ME... YOU
FURRY LITTLE
MONSTER! I
I'M NOT
ONE OF
YOU!

SHREEK
SHREEK

CAN'T
LEAVE
HERE...
LIKE THIS!
MUST GO
INTO HIDING
'TIL I CAN
CHANGE THE
COURSE OF
THIS EVIL
MUTATION!

NO ONE MUST
SEARCH FOR ME...
NO ONE!

NEXT MORNING, A TELEGRAM DELIVERY TO THE CURATOR OF THE GOTHAM MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY...



"MOTHER SERIOUSLY ILL... STOP... MUST FLY TO CHICAGO... STOP. DON'T WORRY... EXHIBIT WILL BE FINISHED TIME FOR OPENING... LANGSTROM"

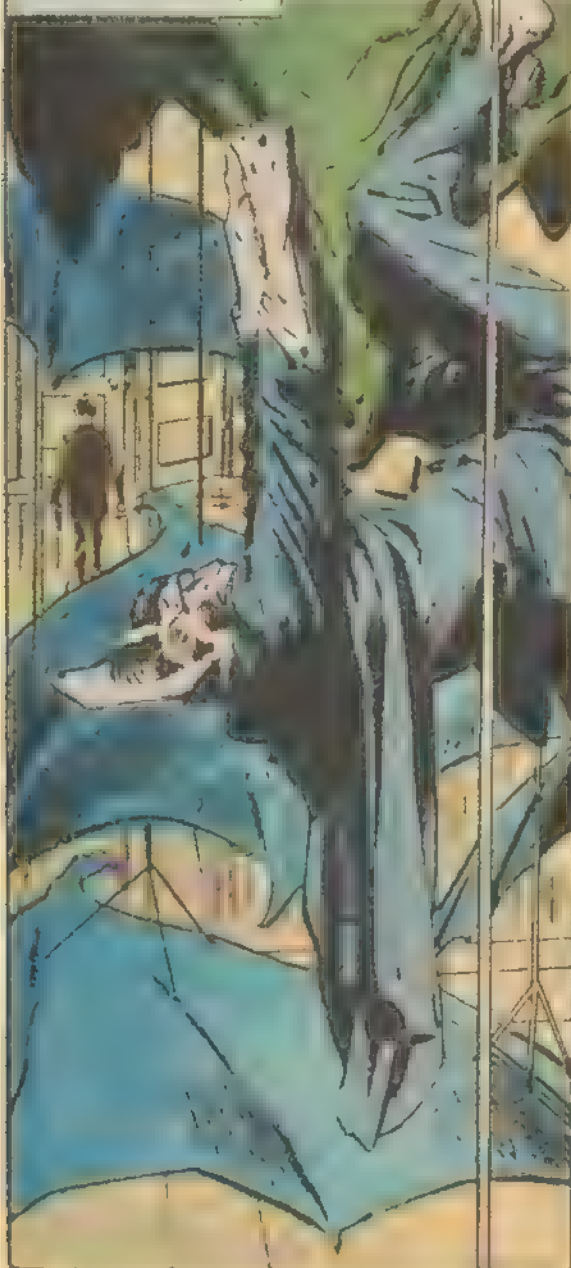


DON'T WORRY?

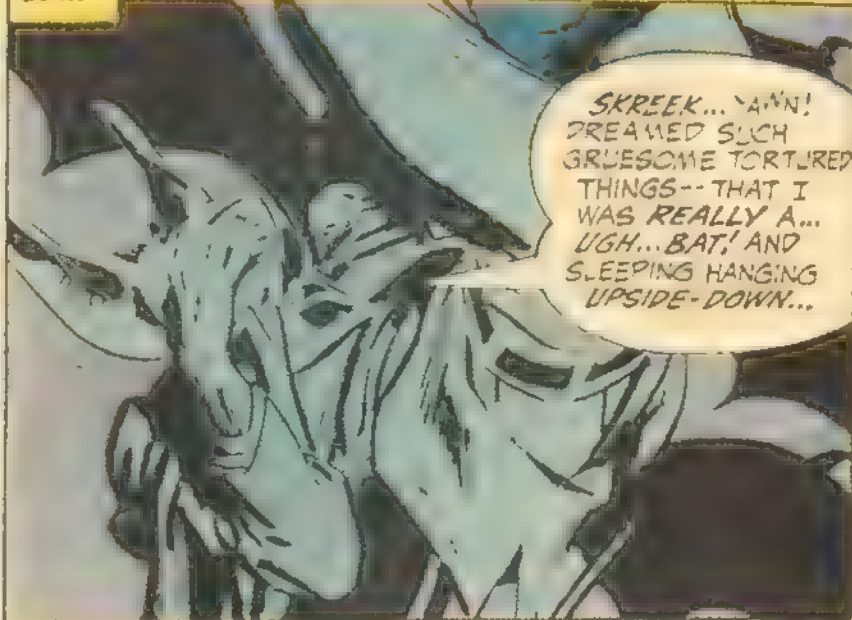
WHO ELSE COULD COMPLETE THIS AUTHENTIC BAT-HABITAT LIKE LANGSTROM?

HE'D BETTER RETURN IN TIME...

WHILE UNAWARE ABOVE, AMONG VENT- CREATURES WHO SLEEP BY DAY...AND FLY BY NIGHT...



AS THE LONG DAY PASSES AND THE MUSEUM SLEEPS AGAIN, AN EMOTIONALLY EXHAUSTED MAN-BAT WAKES, UNREFRESHED...



SKREEK... YAWN! DREAMED SUCH GRUESOME TORTURED THINGS-- THAT I WAS REALLY A... UGH... BAT! AND SLEEPING HANGING UPSIDE-DOWN...

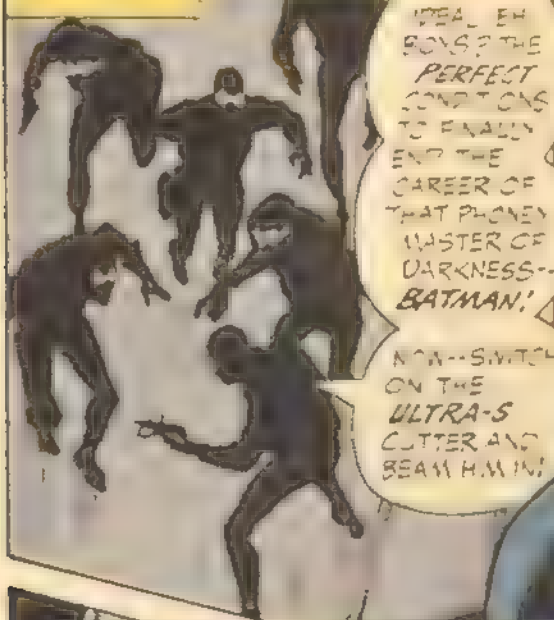


NO DREAM. GASP...NO DREAM! I AM UP HERE... AMONG THEM! AND...AND THE FANTASTIC STRENGTH MY HANDS NOW POSSESS...!



I'M HUNGRY...RAVENOUSLY HUNGRY! THE MUSEUM CREEPER A...THROUGH THE GEN-COLLECTION!

W-LE IN THE TOTALLY BLACKED-OUT GEN HALL...



IDEAL, EH BOYS? THE PERFECT CONDITIONS TO FINALLY END THE CAREER OF THAT PHONY MASTER OF DARKNESS--BATMAN!

NOW--SWITCH ON THE ULTRA-S CUTTER AND BEAM H.M.I.N!

THE BLACKOUT GANG'S BACK IN OPERATION! ONLY THIS TIME I ZERO IN AND CATCH THEM FLAT-FOOTED!

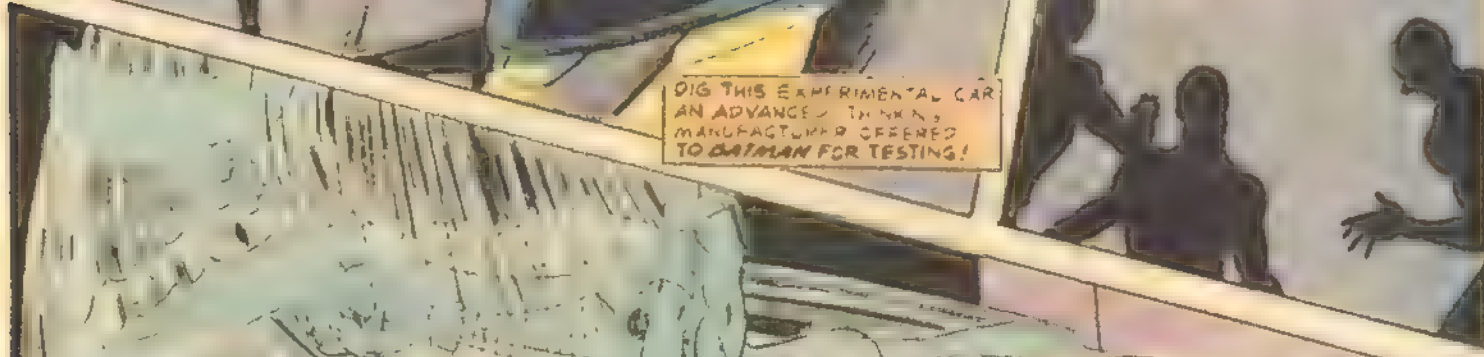


BEEP BEEP BEEP

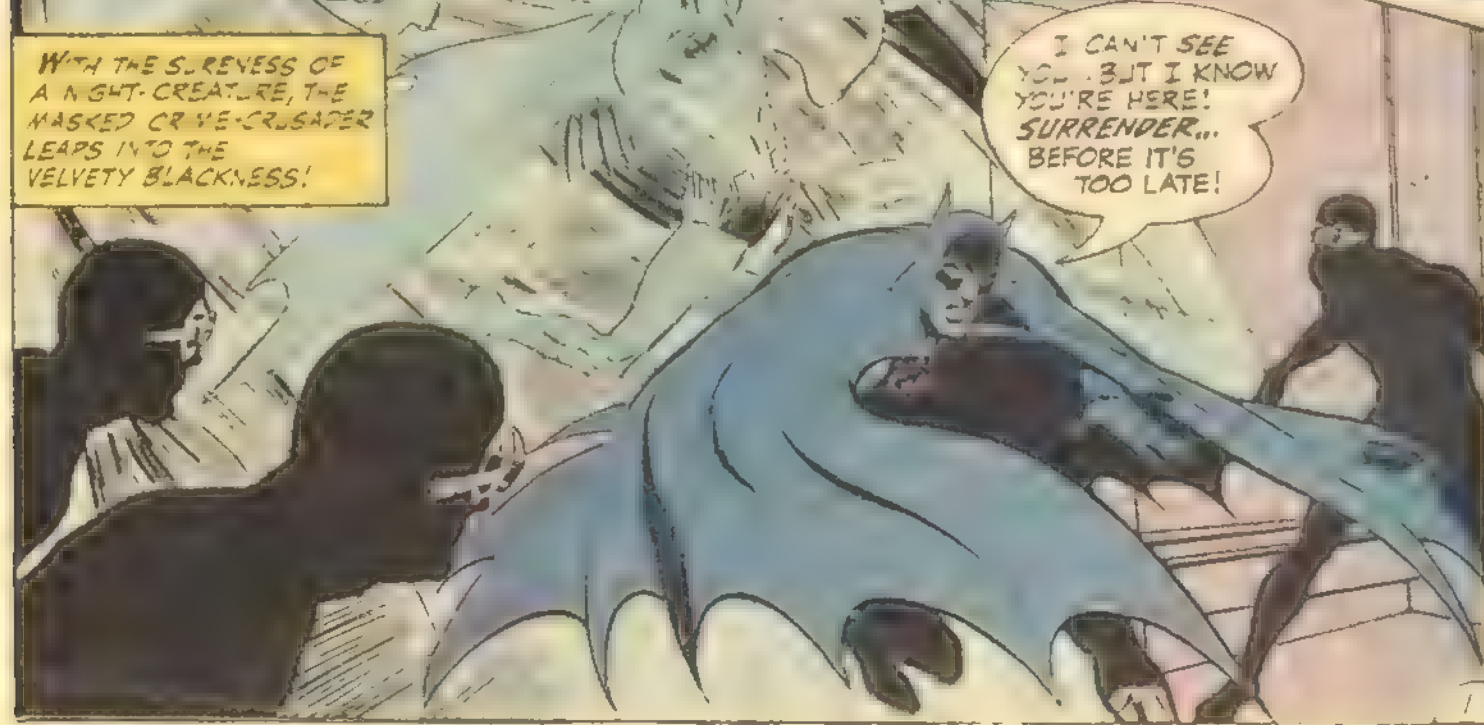
DIG THIS EXPERIMENTAL CAR AN ADVANCE / THINKING MANUFACTURER OFFERED TO BATMAN FOR TESTING!



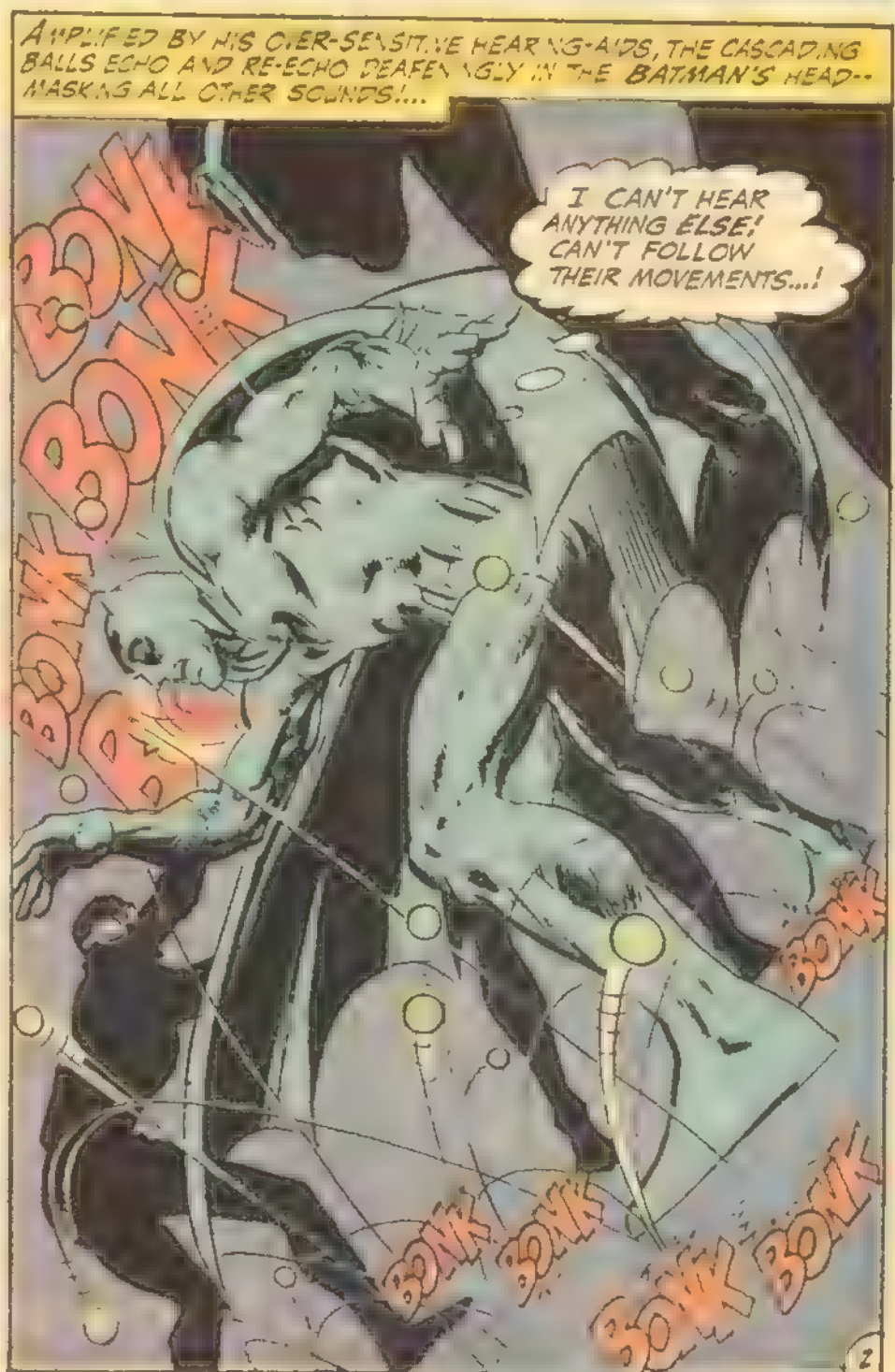
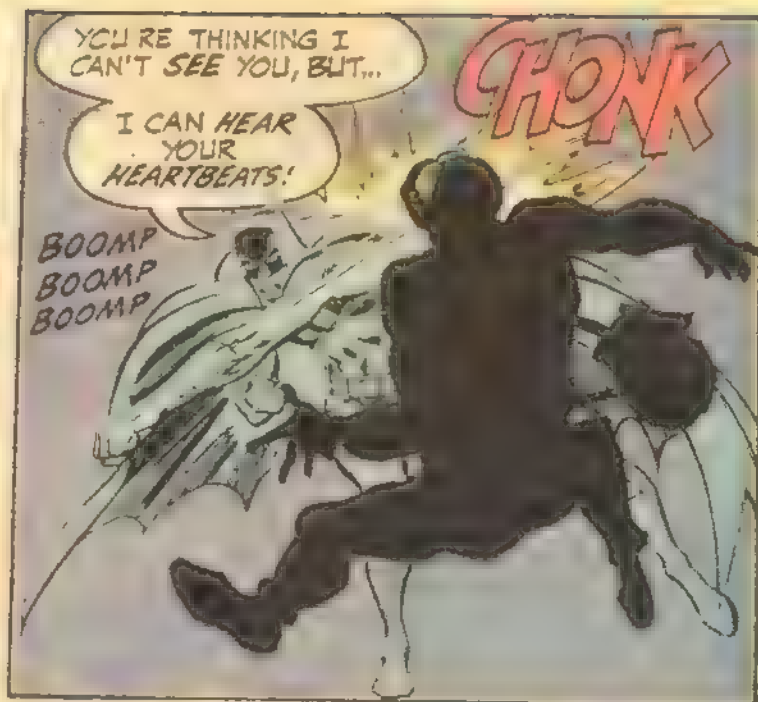
HE'S COMING--FREEZE! NOT A PEEP OUT OF ANYONE--WANT TO TEST IF HE DEVELOPED A COUNTER-ATTACK!



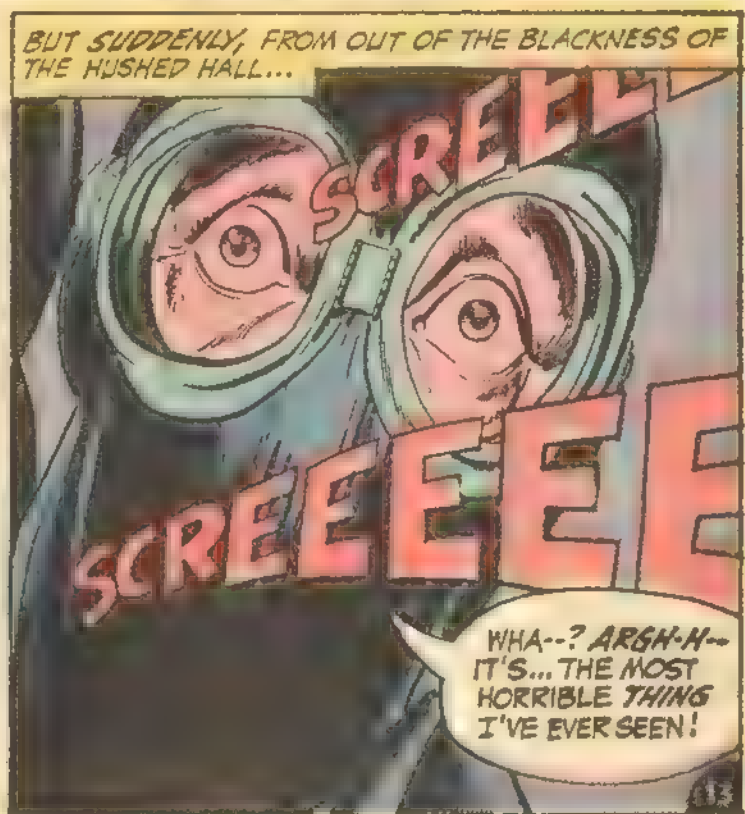
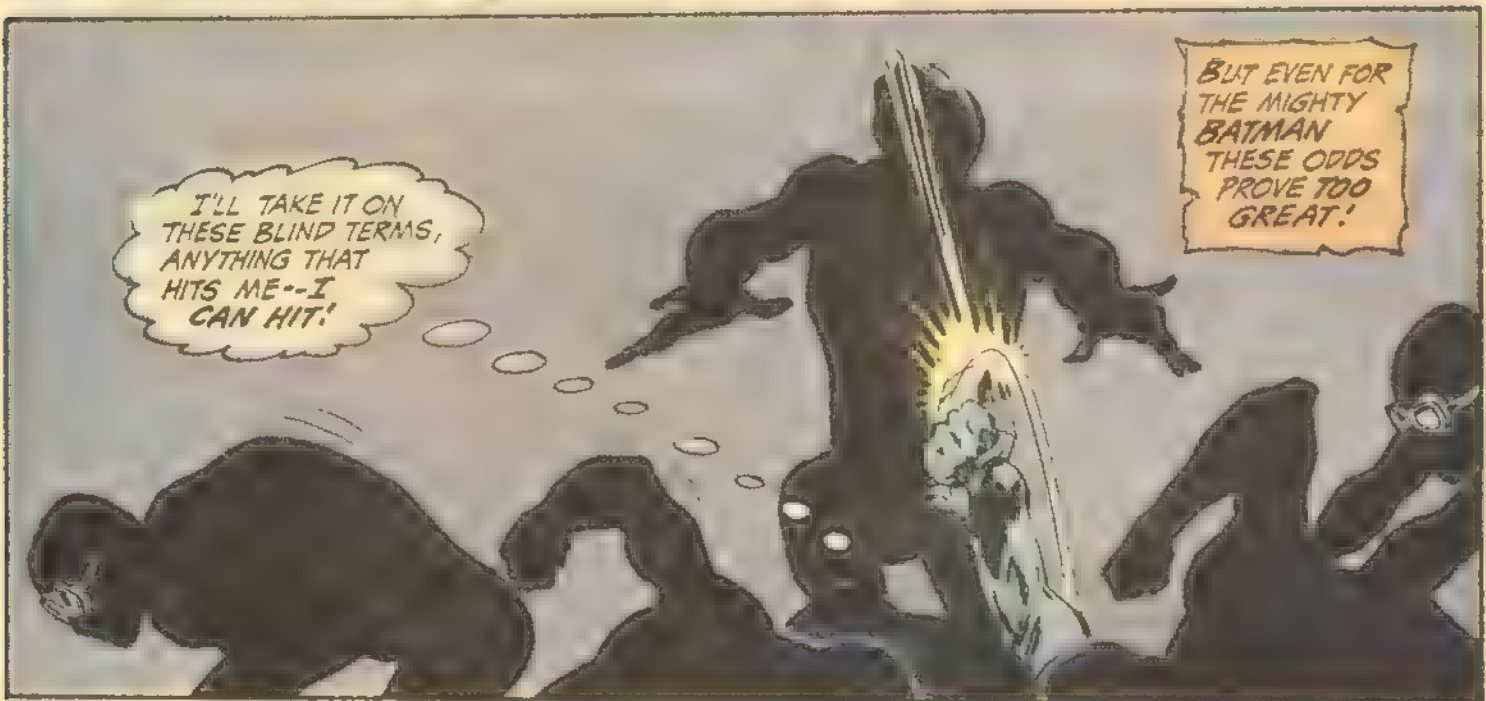
WITH THE SURENESS OF A NIGHT-CREATURE, THE MASKED CRIME-CRUSADER LEAPS INTO THE VELVETY BLACKNESS!

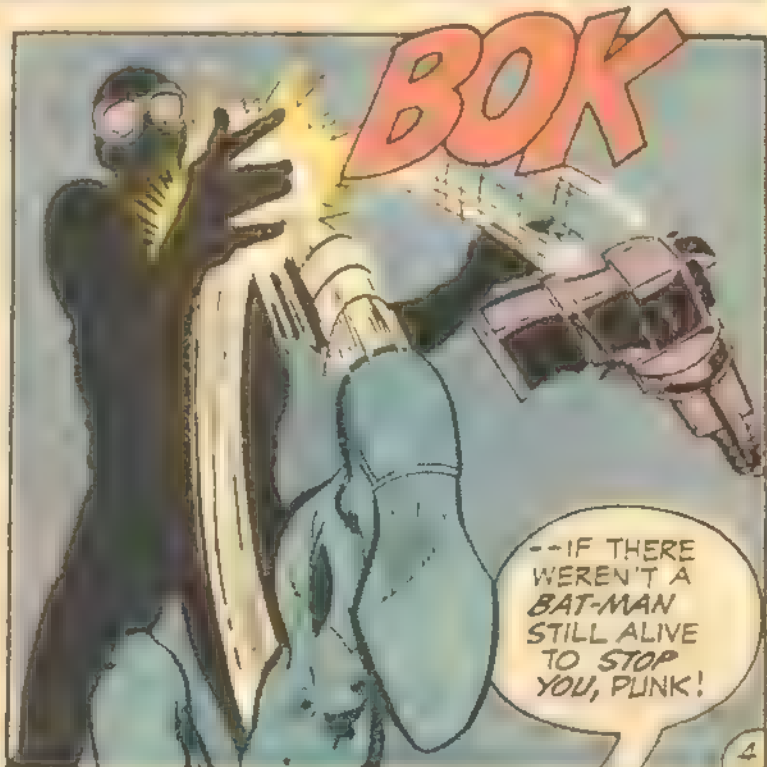
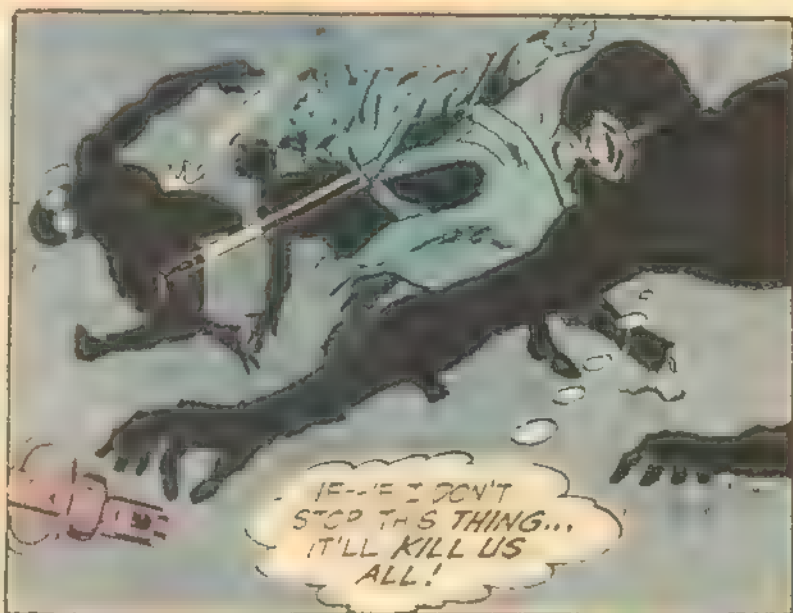
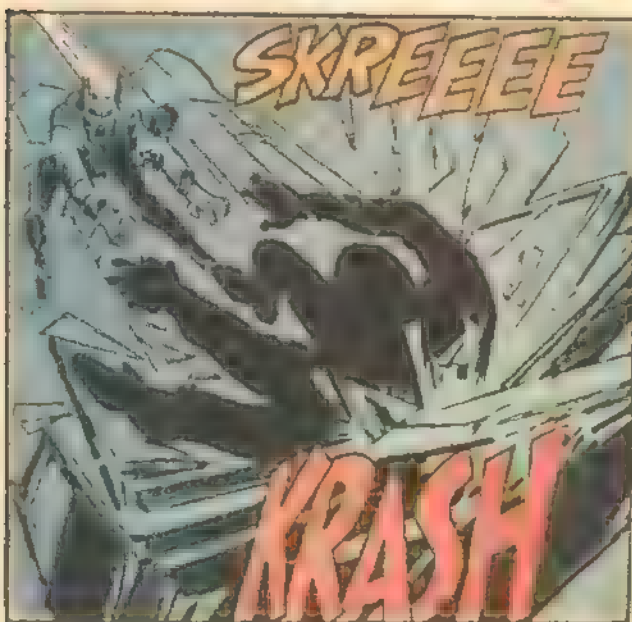
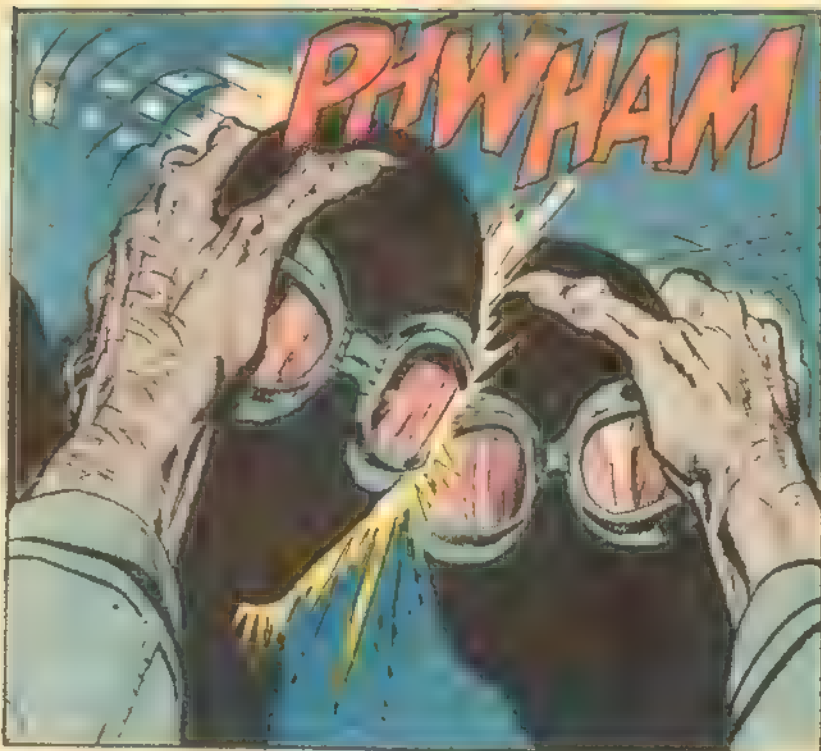


I CAN'T SEE YOU, BUT I KNOW YOU'RE HERE! SURRENDER... BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE!



AS THE BOUNCING, CAROMING PING-PONG BALLS CONTINUE THEIR BEWILDERING CACOPHONY...





THE JOINS--S STRANGE COUNTERPART--BOTH BROTHERS--
UNDER-TH-E-SKIN FINISH OFF THEIR ENEMES... TOGETHER!

GLAD TO HAVE
YOU ON THE
TEAM, FELLA...

IT'S... SKREEK...
WHAT I'VE ALWAYS
DREAMED OF,
BATMAN!

A
BATMAN
WHO NEEDED
A BREATHER!
AND NOW
THAT I'VE
HAD IT...
YOU'VE
HAD IT!

AND WHEN THE T-EGS ARE BATTED DOWN...

SKREEK...
YOU ALL
RIGHT,
BATMAN?

SURE, STRANGER...
THANKS TO YOU!

THAT'S ALL THAT MATTERS!
SKREEK...I MUST GO NOW!

WHAT'S YOUR
HURRY? FOR A GUY
I OWE SO MUCH TO...
YOU'RE AN AWFULLY
MODEST HERO!

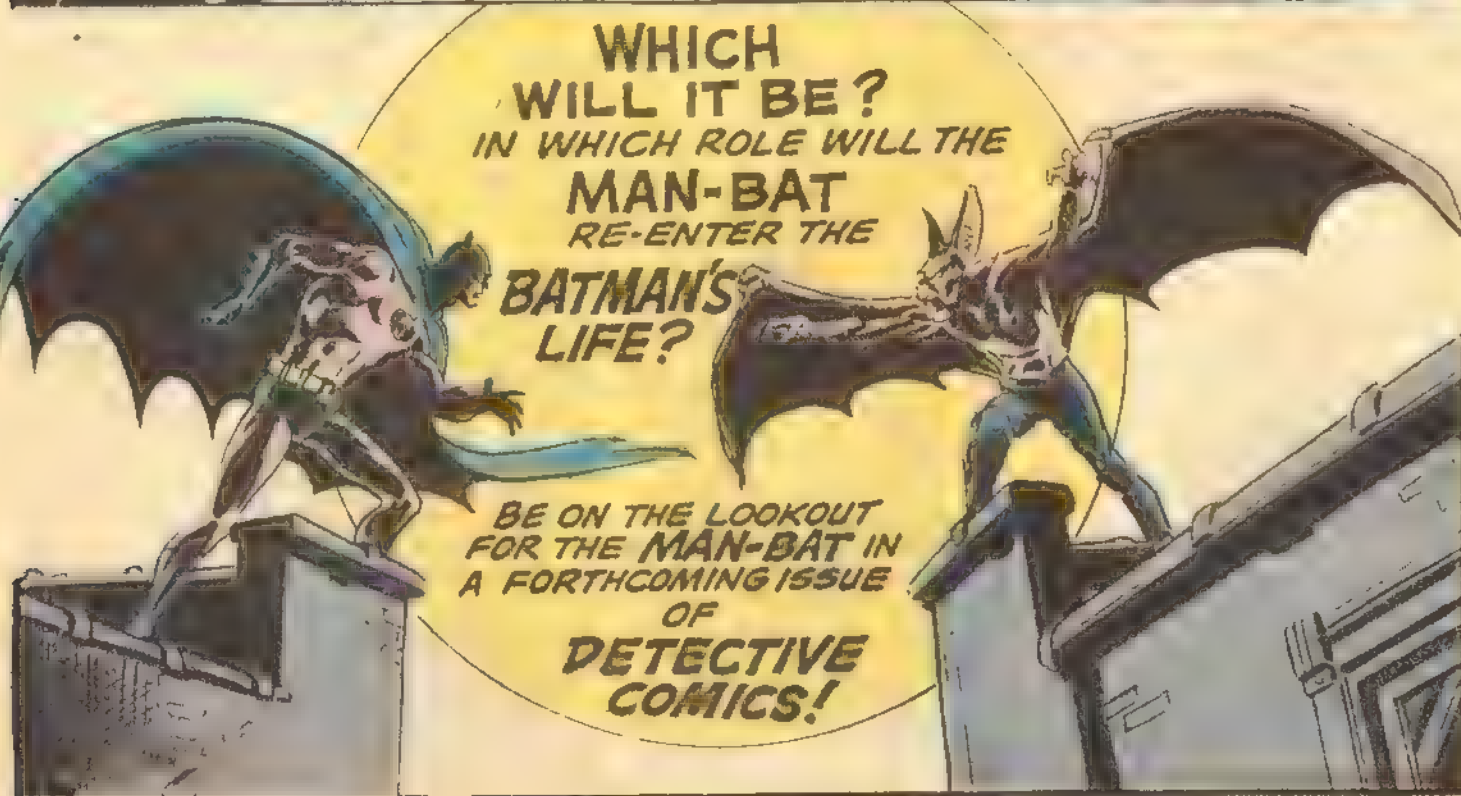
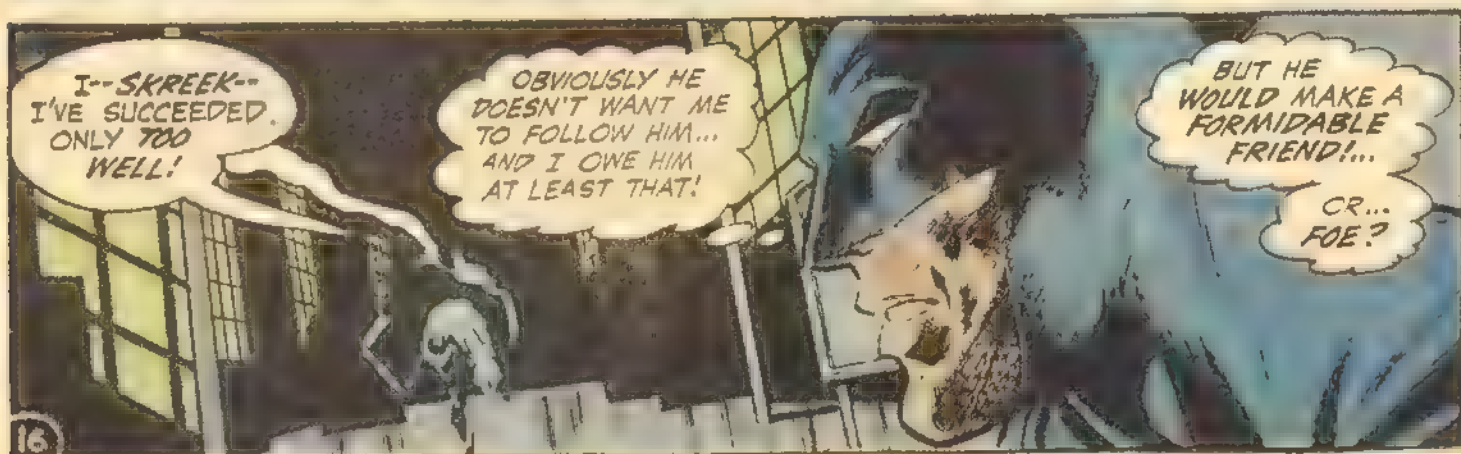
AT LEAST
LET ME SEE
WHO I OWE
MY THANKS
TO...

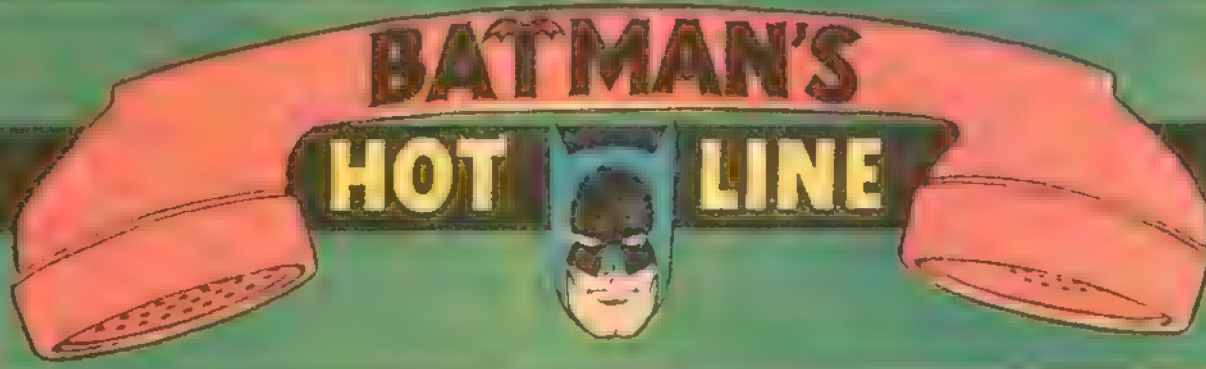
SKREEK! YOU DON'T WANT
TO SEE...NO ONE SHOULD!

IT WAS YOUR INSPIRATION
...YOUR GREAT FIGHT
AGAINST CRIMINALS OF
THE NIGHT--THAT BROUGHT
THIS ON ME!

THEN IF I WAS
YOUR HERO...
WHY HIDE
FROM ME--?

ALL
RIGHT...
SEE!!





Dear Editor:

The *Batman* story in *Detective* #396 ("The Brain-Pickers") was far superior to the *Batman* story in issue #395 ("Secret of the Waiting Graves"), but the art in 395 was better than the art in 396. My point: how about getting artist Neal Adams and writer Frank Robbins together in one yarn?

"The Orchid-Crusher" was the best *Batgirl* story yet. Each of her stories keeps topping the last, and when she started out this wasn't saying much...but it is now. She is handled a lot more realistically than earlier in her career. Robbins was smart to put Jason Bard in a story again, even if only for three panels. This gives us a minor character to look forward to seeing again and just the thought of Babs having a boy friend adds to the story-line. Artwise it was excellent...again.

By the way, I'm looking forward to ish 400. Knowing DC, it should rate 4 stars.

—JACK STEIN, Cleveland, Ohio
(Issue 400 of *Detective Comics* can aptly be summed up by the word togetherness. Frank Robbins and Neal Adams together on the *Batman* story; Robin and *Batgirl* together on the back-up story. If our arithmetic is correct, that does indeed add up to four stars!—Editor)

.....

Dear Editor:

"The Brain-Pickers" in *Detective* #396 was yet another testimonial to Frank Robbins' inherent genius. Robbins has a way with a plot that few writers can match. The stock-market angle was a good basis for a story, even though it was pretty easy to guess that Rory's abbreviated orders were code-distress signals. Unfortunately, *Batman's* new hot-rod were featured again, and more prominently this time. Gimmicks such as this were what you wanted to get away from in the *Big Batman Change*. Besides, I still maintain that *Batman* needs a car about as much as *Superman* needs a plane. The new auto, with its hydraulic impact-absorbers and one-way mirrors, is an extraneous gadget that should have been wrecked this issue when it had a chance.

While the Brown-Giella team is getting consistently better, I had hoped (if "hope" is a strong enough word) that Neal Adams would be doing 'Tec regularly after his introduction last ish. I think Ye Ed realizes that fandom is virtually unanimous in its choice for Neal Adams as *The Man* for our "Bat"!

—STEVE BEERY, Alma, Mich
(During the course of many stories it becomes im-

perative for *Batman* to rush from one end of Gotham City to the other—and Batrope-swinging across rooftops just isn't going to do it...nor is cab-hopping or subway-riding. Neal Adams will continue to illustrate as many *Batman* stories as he can fit into his busy schedule. —Editor)

.....

Dear Editor:

Suddenly, as my Christmas vacation is in its dying spasms, and school is lurking 'round the corner, I am overpowered by an urge to write you, something I haven't done since I was seven or eight years old. (You didn't print that letter, come to think of it!) The subject of this most probably ill-fated letter is *Detective* #396. Please bear with me on the following clumsy examination.

First, the cover. Neal Adams can be and often is the best artist for the *Batman* that you have on your staff. However, I believe that he fell short on this particular effort. The cover looked somewhat hurried (i.e., the absence of a background). Also, *Batman* looked sketchy and one-dimensional (as with the flat cape and that poor excuse for a heel on his boot). It looks like someone had said, "Neal, try to get this cover done before lunch!"

Next, the lead story. I admit I was sort of hoping for a magnificent Neal Adams story, to make up for that near-miss cover. Well, instead I received a good Bob Brown-Joe Giella yarn. Somehow, it reminded me of some earlier "New Look" art, done by that master, Carmine Infantino. All in all, though, I agree with Clem Robins that their art does not suit the mood of the current trend of stories. The one thing that bothered me most about the story's art was that new *Batmobile*. Come on, now. If you believe that sleek racing job (with that bright yellow bat's head on the hood) will not attract attention, well...you'd be better off using the 1942 *Batmobile*, with the massive single bat-wing on the back! (Hey, now that I think about it...!)

The *Batgirl* art on the second story was, as is usual for the Kane-Anderson team, fantastic (though it looked like Gil had to ink the splash panel himself). With two of the greatest artists in comicdom on a story, how can you lose?

Finally, I should say something about the author: When Frank Robbins first did work for DC, I was sure he was going to be the death of every magazine he did work for (so sorry, Mistah Frank!). However, recently, I have found myself actually enjoying his work on occasion. He's not on the top of my list yet,

and I didn't expect him to be, but I must admit that he can sorta grow on you. Rotza ruck, Mistah Frank!

—LEONARD UHLEY, Beverly Hills, Cal.

(Gil Kane did indeed ink that splash page of "The Orchid-Crusher." When he finished penciling it, he could not resist switching to ink...!—Editor)

Dear Editor:

Frank Robbins is not a bad writer. He just has some bad habits that keep popping up in some of his stories. A perfect example of this is the February *Detective's* "The Brain-Pickers." The story was full of Robbins-isms.

First, of course, there's the plot. Teen-age financial genius taken advantage of by criminals, is saved by Bruce (Batman) Wayne, who just happens to be merging with said genius' company. Honestly, has Frank been taking writing lessons from Lorenzo Semple? Coincidence was the specialty of the *Batman-TV* show, and that same coincidence always shows itself in Frank's stories.

Gimmicks are another Robbins trademark. This issue, the gimmicks included a stock-market code (U.S. 2...W.E. 20...) and the use of a remote-control suit for the camouflaged *Bat-car*.

A third Robbins-ism is universal in all his stories: namely, the stupid crook. Espousing such clever phrases as "H-Hey?" and "Dig this!", his crooks are always the biggest clods you can find. For this reason I've always preferred costumed criminals, although I hate the costumes! Does a crook have to have a uniform to have a semblance of a brain?

Surprisingly, none of these Robbins-ism emerged in this issue's *Batgirl* story, "The Orchid-Crusher." And ya know what? It was excellent! All of which proves that Robbins can turn out first-rate stuff if he wants to.

—ALAN BRENNERT, Haledon, N.J.

Dear Editor:

I can hardly wait for this letter to reach you. Over the past few months, my comments to *Detective Comics* haven't exactly spouted praise about your *Batgirl* and *Robin* stories. Until now...

Batgirl's #396 escapade, "The Orchid-Crusher," is the best ALLEY material I've seen for a long time. Mr. Robbins has surely been reading Agatha Christie's mystery novels. Or *Batgirl* has. Either way, it's established a new trend for *Detective Comics*. In this tremendous (if short) story, you went from an "on the edge of the seat" opening and faded to a "nails bitten to the quick" middle, and closed the curtain at a spot where no one (and I repeat, NO ONE) will be able to resist the follow-up issue.

At the conclusion of "Orchid-Crusher", I wanted to turn back to see if Alfred Hitchcock might be lurking in a panel or two. Seriously, though, this story was so intriguing that only Gil Kane and Murphy Anderson could have handled the artwork. Particularly delicious was the pinch of irony in Barbara's reverting to the "Plain Jane" type after abandoning the role a year before. It was also pleasant to see Jason Bard again.

Long may he landscape the *Batgirl* stories.

—SCOTT GIBSON, Sterling, Colo.

Dear Editor:

Do you realize how many recent and not-so-recent covers of your mags have shown *Batman* stricken down, crumpled, beaten, and assumedly dead?

Do you also realize the emotional impact that is taking place because of it? It can, and undoubtedly will, destroy any *Batmaniac's* morale.

After all, who wants to see his hero stricken down by the very criminal force he's sworn to destroy? It's like being a girl teen-ager and seeing Bobby Sherman—with his shirt on. Or seeing Paul McCartney—in his coffin.

So stop it, will ya?

—ANDY FRIEDMAN, Maplewood, N.J.

(Hopefully, when you see those "down-and-out" situations criminally inflicted on *Batman*, is to wonder how he's ever going to get "up-and-at-'em"!—Editor)

Dear Editor

I completely disagree with Mike Daugherty's suggestion in the *Hot-line* of issue #394 to change *Robin's* name, and I sincerely hope you don't consider the change at all. Mike Daugherty's connotation of the name *Robin* as a bird is not shared by others, like me, who do not associate the name with a bird, but rather with a personality—the personality of Dick Grayson. The name *Robin* appeals to me somehow. In what way, I can't quite say, but I do know that that name always attracted me to the fellow who owns it.

Has Mike thought of the consequences that would arise from changing *Robin's* name? A new name would have to be thought up, and it's very unlikely that it'd be completely suitable or satisfactory. A proper name to replace *Robin* would take an awfully long time to think up; besides, I really feel that no name could ever really take the place of *Robin*, which has been ingrained in the hearts of readers since his first existence. You can't possibly just change *Robin's* name after it has been established for so long in everyone's mind. Why, if you change his name once, there will be those who won't be satisfied with the new name, and more name-change requests will be made, to the point when *Robin* will be known by a dozen different names! The name *Robin* is simply too firmly established as the original, characteristic name of the boy detective, and I'm sure many other readers are as satisfied as I am by his present identification.

Please don't ever give your readers cause to regret the changing of *Robin's* time-honored name!

PAM KAO, Covina, Cal

(How does college freshman Dick Grayson himself feel about carrying on with his *Robin* name? Even his *Robin* uniform? The answers will be revealed in "My Place in the Sun," the solo-*Robin* story to appear in the August *Detective Comics*, issue #402!—Editor)

Address communications to BATMAN'S HOT-LINE, National Periodical Publications, 909 Third Ave., New York, N.Y., 10022.

FOR THE FIRST TIME EVER--

BATGIRL

and

ROBIN--

--MATCH WITS AND SKILLS
WITH EACH OTHER,
AND WITH A BRUTAL
KILLER WHO STALKS
THE CAMPUS OF
HUDSON UNIVERSITY.
A CUNNING VILLAIN
WHO ENGINEERS--

"A BURIAL FOR BATGIRL!"

WE GRATEFULLY DEDICATE
THIS STORY TO **EDGAR ALLAN
POE, SS. VANE DINE, AND
REX STOUT**--

DENNY O'NEIL (AUTHOR)
GIL KANE (PENCILER)
VINCE COLLETTA (INKER)

DURING THE WHOLE OF A DULL, DARK AND SOUNDLESS NIGHT IN THE
BLEAKEST PART OF THE YEAR, **BARBARA GORDON** HAS BEEN
DRIVING ALONE FROM **GOOTHAM CITY** TO THE LIBRARY OF
HUDSON UNIVERSITY...



W-H-HELP!

A SCREAM...
SOMEONE INSIDE
THE LIBRARY IS IN
MORTAL
TERROR--!

EVEN AS SHE RACES TOWARD THE SOUL-SHEDDERING
SOUND, **BARBARA** CHANGES TO THE AWESOME
COSTUME OF--**BATGIRL!**...



THEN,
INSIDE...

SO **DARK**... AND I'VE
NEVER BEEN IN THIS
BUILDING BEFORE! DON'T
HAVE ANY **IDEA** WHERE
THE STAIRS ARE--

WAIT--!
SOMEONE'S
COMING...
IN A
HURRY!



OUT OF MY
WAY...

HUH-UH... NOT UNTIL YOU EXPLAIN
WHY YOU'RE **RUNNING!**



I SAID...
**OUT OF MY
WAY!**

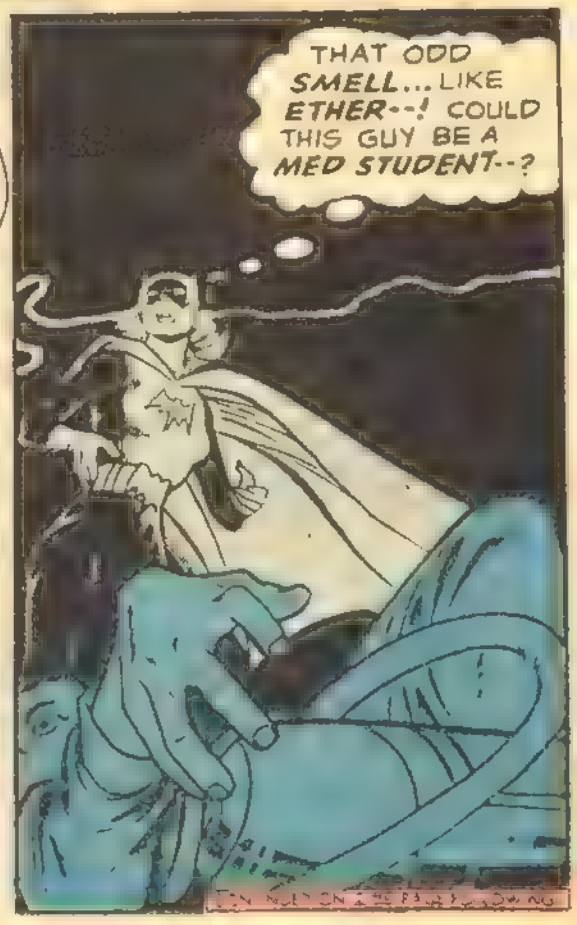
TCH, TCH...
AREN'T YOU THE
CLUMSY ONE!

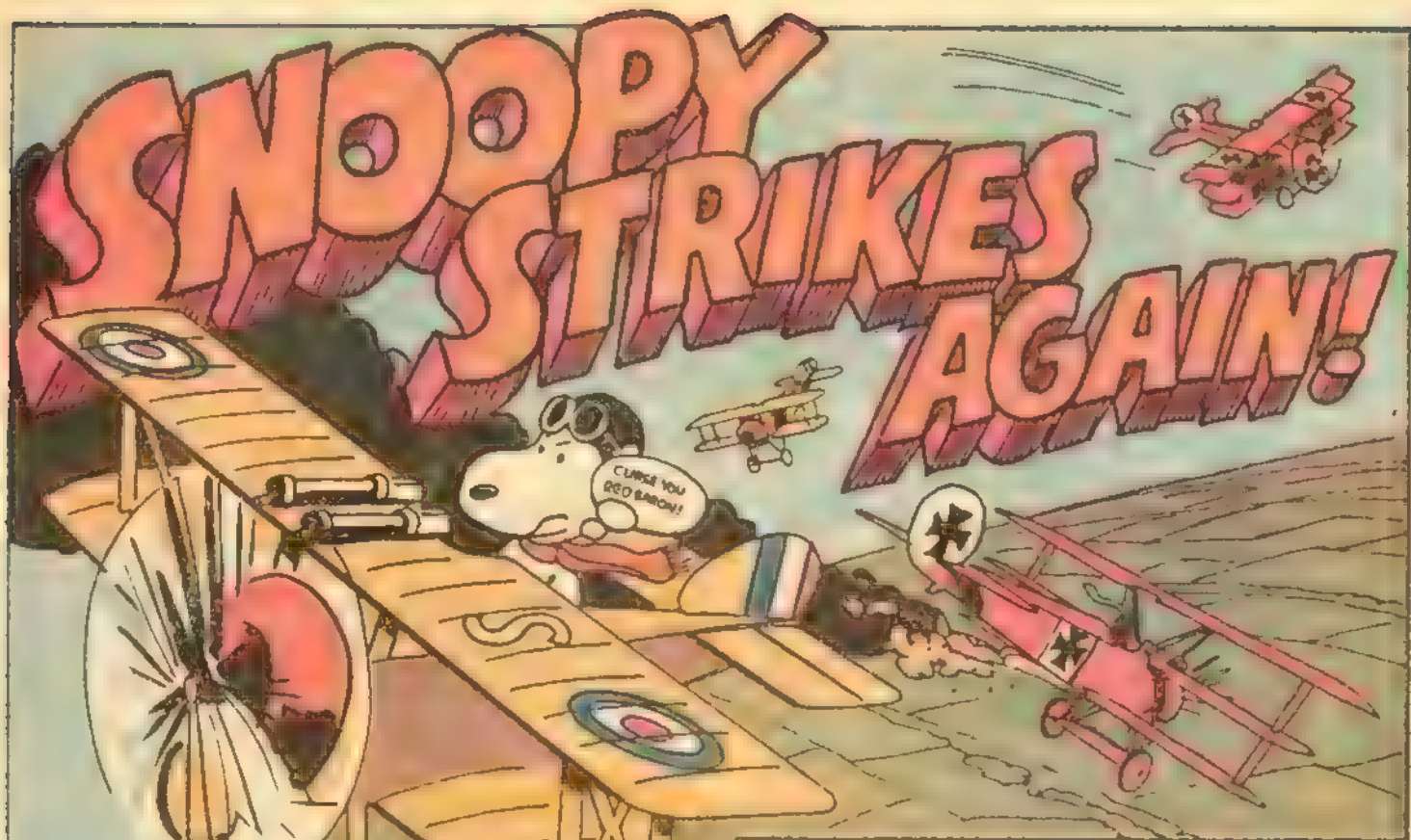


PERHAPS YOU'D
BETTER REST UNTIL
YOU RECOVER
YOUR **COORDINATION!**



THAT ODD
SMELL... LIKE
ETHER--! COULD
THIS GUY BE A
MED STUDENT--?



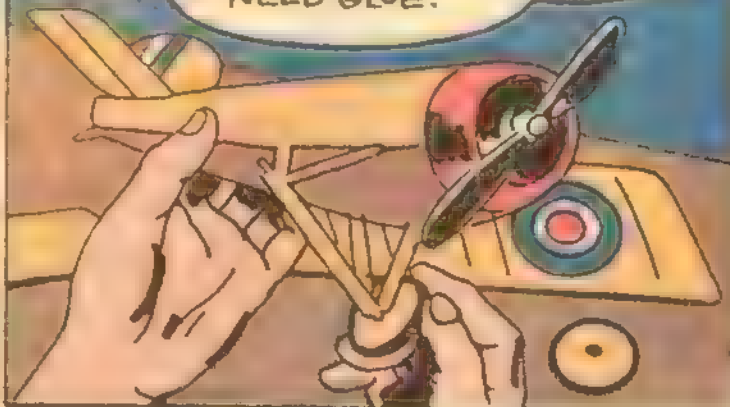


RIDE WITH SNOOPY INTO THE WILDEST DOGFIGHT EVER!

Wow! WHAT A KIT FROM MONOGRAM. HIS SOPWITH CAMEL. COMES WITH A BATTERY-POWERED PROPELLER YOU FLIP TO START LIKE A REAL PLANE.

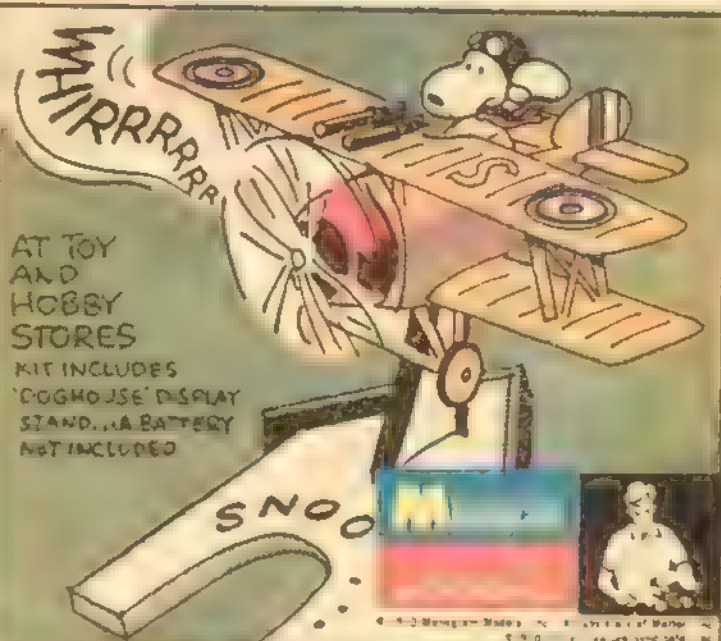


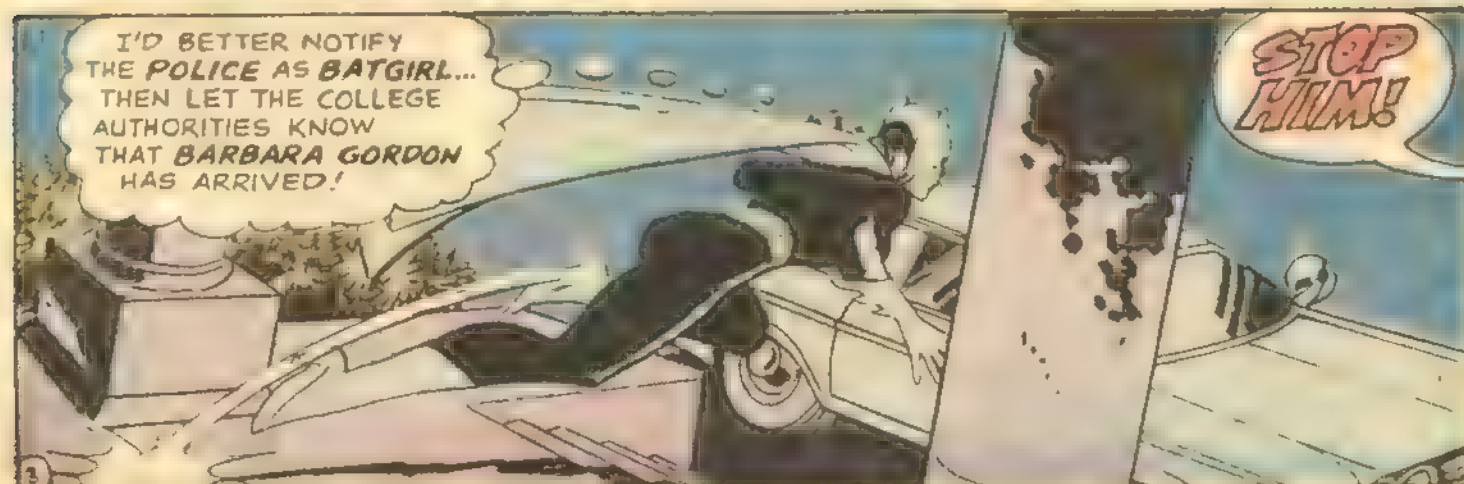
EASY AND FUN TO BUILD. JUST SNAPS TOGETHER SO YOU DON'T NEED GLUE.



MINUTES LATER... LOOKS GROOVY!

AND YOU DON'T EVEN HAVE TO PAINT IT! HERE'S WHERE YOU CAN WRITE SNOOPY'S COMMENTS. LIKE, "CURSE YOU, RED BARON".





GET HIM--!

THE KID WHO SUPED ME! I HAVE A SECOND OPPORTUNITY TO STOP HIM--

-- AND THIS TIME, I HAVE PLENTY OF REASON!

I TRIED JUDO--THE GENTLE WAY-- BEFORE! NOW, I KNOW BETTER! JIU-JITSU'S NASTIER ..

NICE MOVE, LADY! WE'LL FINISH THE JOB--!

YEAH I ONLY WISH I WAS WEARING MY FOOTBALL SHOES!

BEFORE YOU KICK HANK, YOU'LL HAVE TO BOOT ME!

...BUT A LOT MORE EFFECTIVE!

BEAT IT, GRAYSON! OR WE WILL GIVE YOU WHAT THIS PUNK'S GONNA GET!

GO ON, MARKHAM! SCARE ME MORE

BATGIRL... I ALWAYS HEARD YOU WERE ON THE SIDE OF THE UNDERDOG!

I DON'T UNDERSTAND THIS... THIS HOSTILITY! I ONLY KNOW THE KID I STOPPED MAY HAVE COMMITTED MURDER!

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WE WANT TO **THANK** YOU FOR YOUR COÖPERATION, MISS... **BATGIRL!** BY THE WAY... WHAT BRINGS YOU TO THESE PARTS?

I... UH... CAME ALONG WITH MY FRIEND **BARBARA GORDON!** **BARBARA'S** DELIVERING A RARE FIRST EDITION OF THE STORIES OF **EDGAR ALLAN POE!**

HUDSON U IS HAVING A BIG **POE FESTIVAL** NEXT WEEK!

DON'T I KNOW IT!--A **HEADACHE** FOR THE WHOLE DEPARTMENT... ASSIGNING GUARDS FOR THOSE RARE BOOKS... ASSIGNING MEN TO THE SPECIAL PERFORMANCES AT THE CAMPUS THEATER --

YOU SEEM **CONVINCED** THE STUDENT I CAPTURED IS **GUILTY!** THE EVIDENCE AGAINST HIM IS **CIRCUMSTANTIAL...**

CIRCUMSTANTIAL.. BUT STRONG!

Y'SEE...THE LAD YOU STOPPED IS **HANK OSHER...** A SORT OF A STUDENT **RADICAL.** GOT QUITE A FOLLOWING...

...AND THE LAD WHO WAS CHASING HIM IS **JACK MARKHAM...** AN **ACTING MAJOR** AT THE **DRAMA DEPARTMENT**.

...BOTH TAKE COURSES FROM **PROFESSOR HUNTINGTON** A **BIOLOGIST...**

...THE MURDERED MAN IS **AMOS WILLARD,** THE SCHOOL'S **BUSINESS MANAGER...**



"IT ALL STARTED AT A RALLY LAST NIGHT. Y'SEE, THE SCHOOL'S BOARD OF TRUSTEES WANTS TO SELL SOME WOODLAND AT THE NORTH END OF THE CAMPUS TO A BUILDER! WILLARD WAS ALL IN FAVOR--"



THE REVENUE WILL ENABLE US TO BUILD A NEW GYM, AND...

NO! THIS IS INSANITY--

THOSE WOODS ARE THE **LAST** HABITAT OF A CERTAIN SPECIES OF MOSS--

SURE, PROFESSOR HUNTINGTON! AND THE EARTH **MAY** BE FLAT AS A PIE-PLATE! YOUR SO-CALLED RESEARCH COULD COME TO **NOTHING!** I ASSURE YOU, THE MONEY WE'D RECEIVE FROM THE SALE IS QUITE **REAL!**

DON'T PAY ANY ATTENTION TO THE EFFETE, IMPUDENT SNOB, MR. WILLARD!

--PLANTS MY RESEARCHES SHOW HAVE **ENORMOUS** MEDICAL USE!

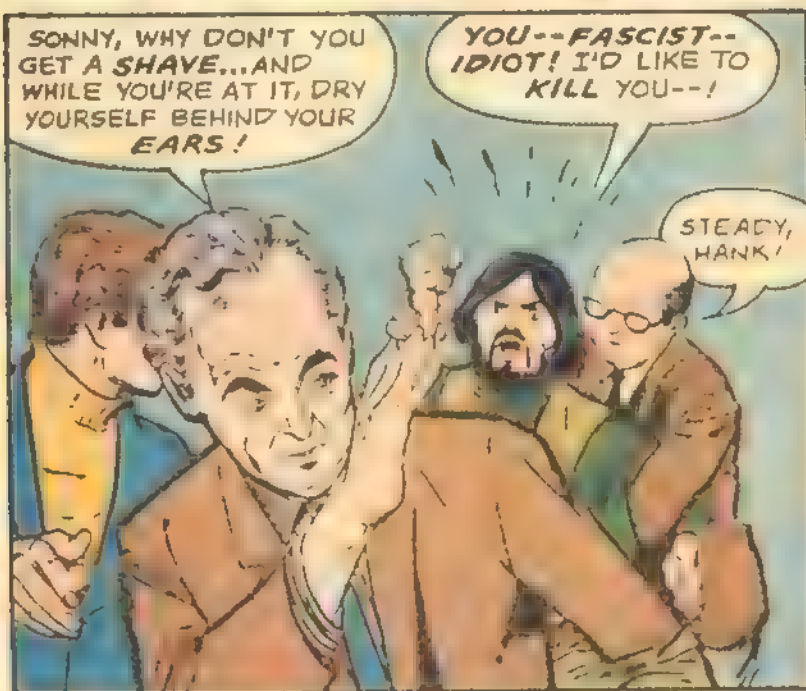
YEAH, LISTEN TO THAT **DUMB** ACTOR, WILLARD!



SONNY, WHY DON'T YOU GET A **SHAVE...** AND WHILE YOU'RE AT IT, DRY YOURSELF BEHIND YOUR **EARS!**

YOU--**FASCIST--** IDIOT! I'D LIKE TO **KILL YOU--!**

STEADY, HANK!



SO Y'SEE, WITH THE THREAT AND ALL... **HANK OSHER** LOOKS GOOD FOR THE CRIME!

ALMOST **700** GOOD! CHIEF, I'D LIKE TO SPEAK WITH THE BOY!



YOU CLAIM YOU'RE **INNOCENT!** WHY WERE YOU **RUNNING?**

SOMEBODY KNOCKED ME ON THE HEAD.. WHEN I CAME TO, THOSE THREE GOONS WERE STANDING OVER ME... I **ADMIT IT!** I **PANICKED--!**



IT IS ALMOST MIDNIGHT AS
THE MYSTERIOUS MAIDEN
STEPS AGAIN INTO THE
NIGHT...



MAYBE IT'S ONLY MY
GIRLISH HEART RESPONDING
TO HIS BIG BLUE EYES...
BUT I WANT TO BELIEVE
HANK OSHER!

EVEN THOUGH I SAW
HIM AT THE SCENE OF
THE CRIME...THIS WHOLE
CASE SMELLS WRONG--!



S'MELL
SMELL!
--OF
COURSE!

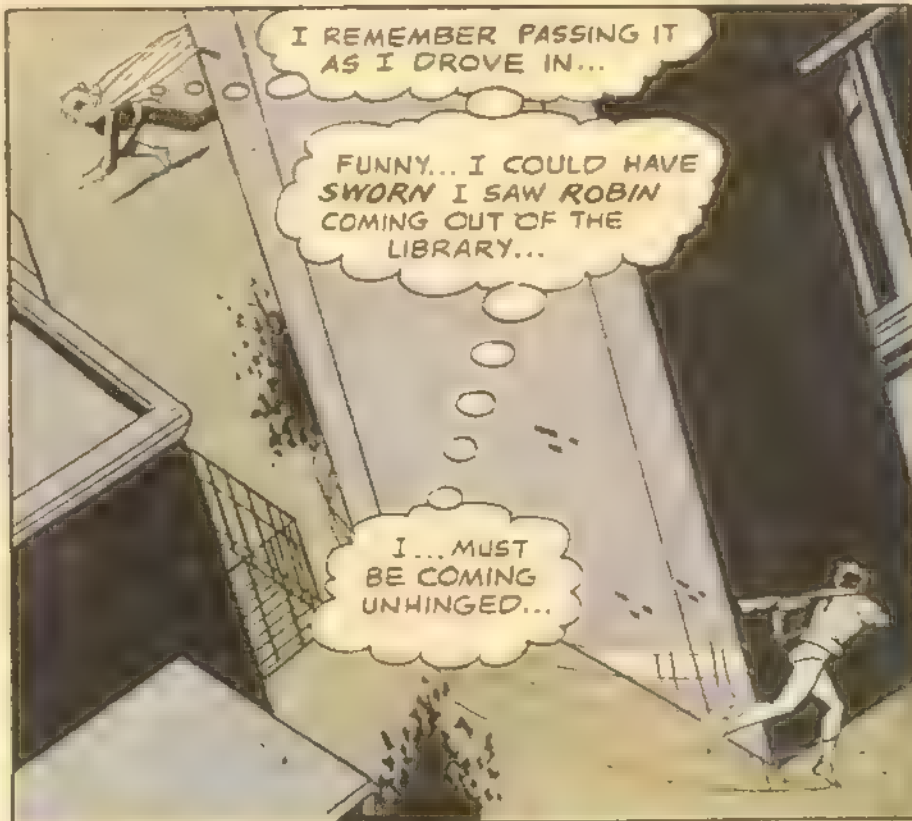
IF HANK *ISN'T*
GUILTY, I KNOW
WHERE TO LOOK
FOR WHOEVER
IS!



I REMEMBER PASSING IT
AS I DROVE IN...

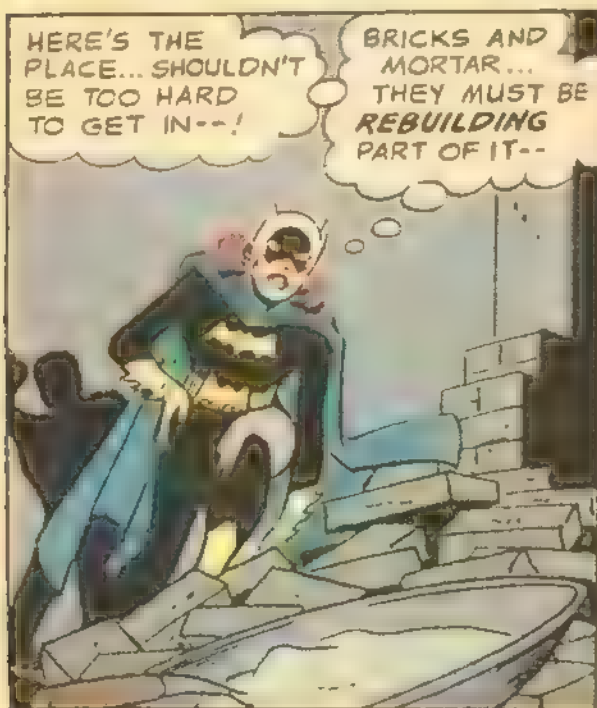
FUNNY... I COULD HAVE
SWORN I SAW ROBIN
COMING OUT OF THE
LIBRARY...

I... MUST
BE COMING
UNHINGED...

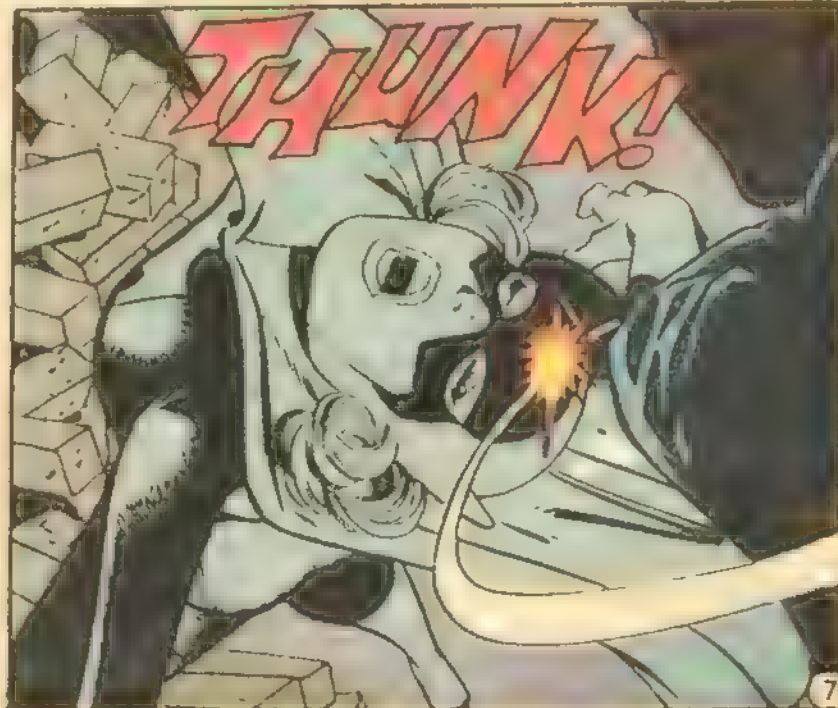


HERE'S THE
PLACE... SHOULDN'T
BE TOO HARD
TO GET IN--!

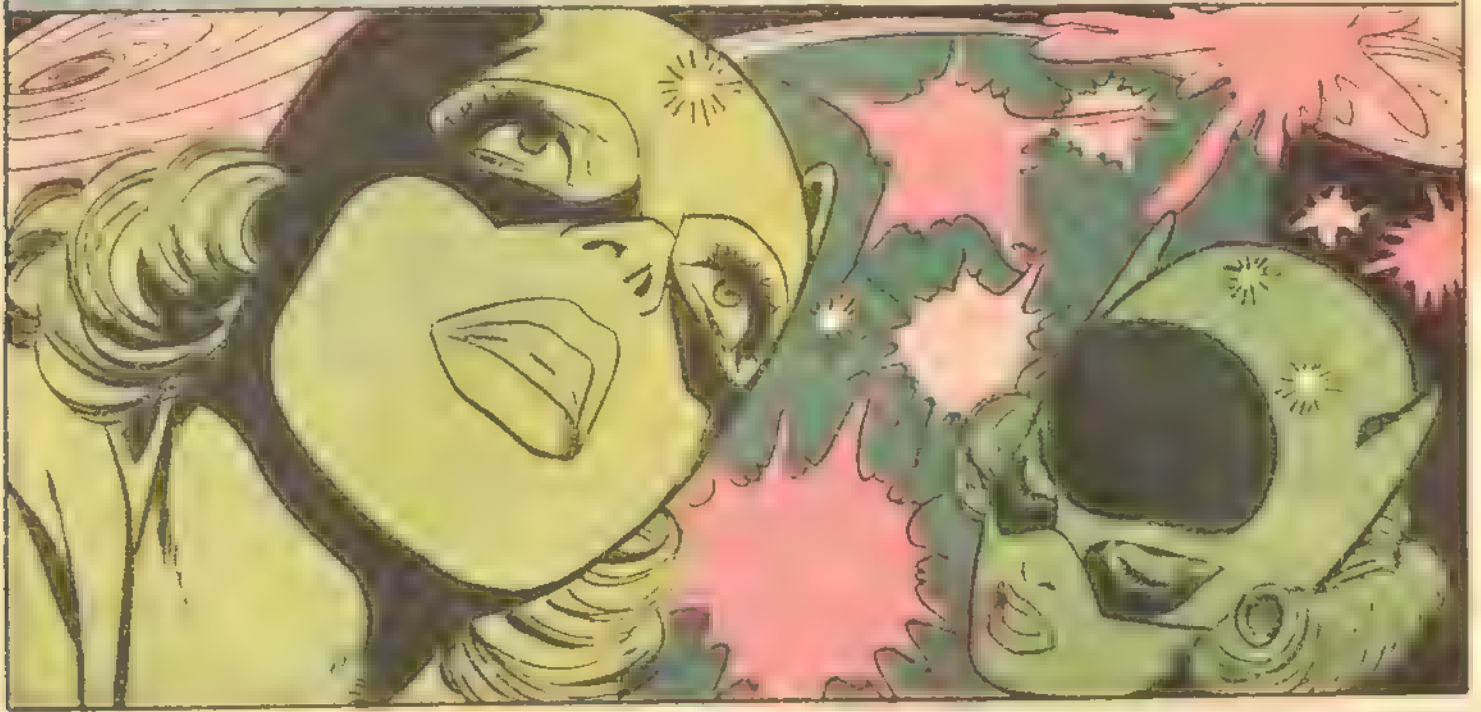
BRICKS AND
MORTAR...
THEY MUST BE
REBUILDING
PART OF IT--



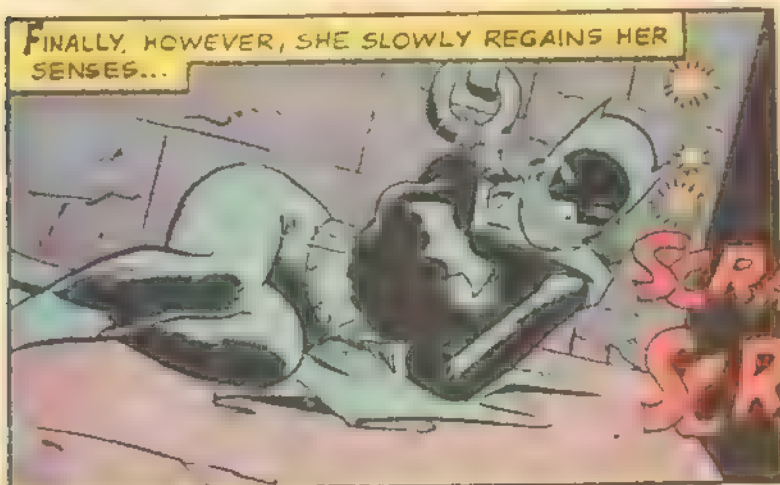
THUNK!



INJURY AND PAIN...VERY DREADEFUL PAIN...TORMENT THE HELPLESS GIRL IN HER DELIRIUM!...



FINALLY, HOWEVER, SHE SLOWLY REGAINS HER SENSES...



...OPENS HER EYES AND, AN INSTANT LATER, IS SEIZED WITH MORTAL TERROR...



...FOR HER ASSAILANT HAS SECURED HER TO THE WALL OF A DAMP CELLAR WITHIN A SMALL NICHE... AND, BRICK BY BRICK, INCH BY INCH, IS CLOSING IT OFF-- BUILDING A **TOMB FOR BATGIRL!**



ROBIN, AT THIS VERY INSTANT, IS ATTEMPTING TO SOLVE THE WILLARD MURDER! BUT WILL HE LEARN THE KILLER'S IDENTITY BEFORE THE FIEND FINISHES HIS INSANE TASK? ONLY TIME AND NEXT ISSUE WILL TELL... **"MIDNIGHT IS THE DYING HOUR!"**

**TAKE A
GIANT
STEP...**

**TOWARD YOUR
NEWSSTAND...
FOR THIS
COLOSSAL ISSUE!**

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- KRYPTONITE TURNING SUPERMAN INTO THE KING OF THE SUPERHEROES!
- THE SECRET OF THE GOLD KRYPTONITE!
- NOT A SUPERHERO BUT A SUPERHERO!
- SUPERMAN IS BEING CRUSHED BY KRYPTONITE ROCK!
- SUPERMAN IS BEING CRUSHED BY KRYPTONITE ROCK!

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JUNE NO. 272

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- HERE THEY COME!
- ONE OF THEM IS DEAD - BUT WHICH ONE?
- DEAD MEN TALK!
- THE CLUE IS ON THEIR ALBUM COVER!

**TWO
SUPER
HITS
COMING
FROM
D.C.
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APRIL 21ST**

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NO. 119 JUNE

Labels on cover:
- THEY SAY IT'S THE FLASH!
- IT ONLY BECAME TRUE & COULD BE THEM!
- PLEASE HAND IT OVER TO GOD!

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